



STUDY CIRCLE

BRITISH GUIANA – MARINE DETATCHMENT BY CHARLES FREELAND



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BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

OBJECTS

- 1 TO promote interest in and the study of the stamps and postal history of the islands that comprise the British West Indies and in addition BERMUDA, BRITISH GUIANA (GUYANA) and BRITISH HONDURAS (BELIZE) and the Postal History and markings of all other Caribbean territories during any period that they were under British administration or control, and those British Post Offices which operated in the Caribbean, and Central or South America.
- 2 TO issue a quarterly BULLETIN containing articles, items of interest and other features.
- 3 TO loan books from the Circle library (home members only). Borrowers bear postage both ways.
- 4 TO publicise 'wants' and furnish opinions on stamp(s) and/or cover(s) for a nominal fee.
- 5 TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aim in paragraph 1 above.

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SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS & INFORMATION**PHILATEX MEETING 2008**

... is to be held on Saturday 1 November 2008 from 3pm to 5:30pm in Room 32 at the Horticultural Halls, Lawrence Hall, Greycoat & Elverton Street, London SW1.

Paul Wright will be displaying his Jamaica and we have decided that the second half should be made up of smaller displays of a minimum of 16 sheets brought along by members on the day.

MONTSERRAT MUSEUM

Mike Smith from New Zealand has asked us to alert members to the fact that the Montserrat Museum is keen to build up its early historical records, and in this respect members who possess or have access to documents or letters that containing interesting information about conditions on the island in the 18th and early 19th century, i.e. trade, plantations, slavery etc. are invited to supply Photostats. The contact person is Mrs Joan Smith, the Montserrat National Trust, Box 393, Olveston, Montserrat. If you have any questions Mike's email address is now smithfamilycircus@xtra.co.nz

EDWARD PROUD RDP

Congratulations to Edward Proud who has been elected to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, our third Member with that honour.

ABPS HARROGATE

Congratulations to Graham Booth who achieved Large Gold for his 5 frame exhibit of 'The 1st 35 years of the Cayman Islands Post office 1889-1923'.

Joseph Hackmey also achieved two Large Golds including 'Best in Show' for 'Classic Grenada'.

BWI**CARIBBEAN STAMP MYSTERIES 1953–1963 [BARBADOS] BY EDMUND A. BAYLEY, FRPSL**

I am writing this is response to an article by David Wright which appears in Bulletin No. 216, March 2008 of the BWISC. My comments here relate only to the Barbados Stamps of the 1953 Queen Elizabeth II issue, which are illustrated in the article. While I agree with the contents of the article, I would like to clarify for the benefit of readers why Barbados made this change. It must be remembered that at that time, Barbados was only a British Colony, not an independent nation, and was therefore subject to the control of the British Government in the United Kingdom. It must also be borne in mind that, from time to time, the UPU legislated what the colours of certain stamps should be as they relate to a particular rate, e.g. Local rate, Air mail rate, Post Card rate etc. For example therefore, if the UPU said that the Air Mail rate stamp must be 'red', then the fact that the design of that stamp depicted the sea, then the sea must be red, although blue would have been the correct colour, regardless of how hideous it may look. In my book, 'The Stamps of Barbados', which was published in 1989, I set out on pages 188/9 the reasons for the Change of Colour of the several denominations, including the 6c and 8c. This became necessary as a result of a revision of postal rates in accordance with Article 106 of the Universal Postal Convention, 1947 These colour changes were approved by the Crown Agents on behalf of the Postal Authorities on 17 December 1951 for the King George VI set and it was agreed that new printings of these denomination would appear in the new colours, when further stocks were ordered. However, with the sudden death of His Majesty King George VI in February 1952, the colour changes were postponed until the Queen Elizabeth stamps could be issued. For the benefit of readers, I reproduce below the text of the Savingram dated 11 September 1951 sent by His Excellency the Governor of Barbados to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

STAMPS – CHANGE OF COLOUR

As a result of a revision of international postal rates it is necessary in accordance with Article 106 of the Universal Postal Union Convention, 1947, to change the colours of several of the present issue of stamps.

2. The following changes have been made:
 - 3c is the unregistered single rate printed paper rate instead of 2c.
 - 5c is the unregistered postcard rate instead of 4c.
 - 8c is the unregistered single rate letter rate instead of 6c.
3. The following changes are suggested:
 - (a) The 2c stamp (Green) be changed to blue-green with orange centre.
 - (b) The 3c stamp (Brown/Blue Green) be changed to green with black centre, it being understood that provided the predominating colour is green the black centre may be black.
 - (c) The 4c stamp (Carmine) be changed to orange with black centre.
 - (d) The 6c stamp (Blue) be changed to chocolate.
 - (e) The 8c stamp (Pale Blue/Purple Brown) be changed to blue with black centre, blue being the predominating colour.
4. You will be aware that there is at present no 5c stamp which will have to be red and I will address you further on the subject of a design.
5. If there are no objections, it would be appreciated if the Crown Agents could be asked to arrange that future supplies be in these new colours.

GOVERNOR.

As for the comments about the 'flying fish' on the 12c denomination, I would like to say that the flying fish depicted on this stamp is a horrible reproduction of the flying fish, and if Mr. Wright believes that the particular flying fish depicted would never fly, then I would have to agree with him. However, I would like to assure Mr. Wright, if he has any doubt, that the flying fish does fly. Over the years, I have seen thousands of them out in the ocean, and believe me, they do fly. I recall, one night in the ocean in 1982 in my yacht 'Morning Mist' while on the way from Barbados to Tobago for 'Tobago Race Week', a young flying fish flew into my yacht and struck me in my face. I can speak from personal knowledge and experience.

As far as the colour of the flying fish is concerned, the colour depicted on the 12c stamp is the same as the sea. This is incorrect. The flying fish has a deep blue colour down its back and its body is a whitish silvery colour.

Any blame for these colour changes should not be totally placed on the Barbados Postal Authorities, but must also be borne by the British Government or the Universal Postal Union, as Barbados could only 'toe the line' at that time.

CROSS ENGLISH CHANNEL ROUTING MB MARK

BY GRAHAM BOOTH

Re Article by Dick Hemmings in December 2007 issue.

I am not aware of any rule that said you could not address mail to foreign destinations if it was posted on board a private cross channel vessel, nor can I think of any logical reason why there should be such a rule. Not that this means there wasn't one, particularly in France with whose rules I only have a fleeting acquaintance! Mail struck with the MB mark was not just carried by such ships, it was posted on board, or at a later date at the bottom of the gangplank when the ship was in port. Early mail struck with London MB1 is scarce and 1852 extends the use of this mark known to Tabart by 2 years. In later years when Mobile Box mail became more frequent, particularly on post cards, it is the case that the vast majority of mail posted on board tended to be backwards looking, thanking people you were leaving behind etc. If mail was intended for places to which you were going it made more sense to post it when you went ashore. Mail was not sorted or cancelled on board but at the office of the destination port.

Posting the letter on board as opposed to posting it in a French port would avoid the payment of the decime de mer (the French equivalent of the outgoing ship letter charge) and take advantage of the UK weight progression which was more liberal than the French at this time. Of course before 1836 it was not possible to pay a letter to a destination in the Caribbean via the UK from France because there was no Convention between the two countries. Correspondents overcame this difficulty by the use of forwarders in British ports, but even then would frequently double address the letter so all the forwarder had to do was to cross out his own address rather than having to add the address of the ultimate destination.

I presume the Ship Letter mark was for an incoming letter and that the letter was sent to Jamaica per the Royal Mail Steam Packet 'Parana', the first time the main line vessel went to Jamaica on 2nd June; but if so the rate ought to have been 1/8d. The additional 2d for colonial postage should not have been charged for Kingston, unless there is something of which I am not aware. In addition the 8d charge for an incoming ship letter should not have been charged as this was negated by the use of the MB mark which created an incoming penny rate. So unless somebody can demonstrate that I am wrong (which is eminently possible) the total charge should have been 1/1d. Dick Hemming's cover may not be from a unique routing, but the combination of a London Mobile Box mark, London Ship Letter and Jamaica destination makes it very scarce. If it had been a Newhaven mark (I collect Sussex Ship letters) I would have been green.

MEMBER WANTS

Charles Freeland is looking for a picture of the following item from the DLR records: 1916 new key plate die mounted on card and endorsed 'Nov 1st 120 leads/No.2'.

This die shows the 'leaves' type design used for the GV issues of Br. Honduras, Grenada and the 2d and 2/6 of St. Lucia (also Br. Solomon Is and Malta).

It was referred to in lot 176 in the RL catalogue of 13 April 1986, a Br Honduras lot.

BWI**KING GEORGE VI POSTMARKS BOOK – A PERSPECTIVE****BY DAVID HORRY**

Continued from Bulletin No. 216, March 2008.

With Dickon Pollard as my chosen editor, Stuart Babbington at Murray Payne was more than happy to publish *The Encyclopaedia of the Postmarks of the West Indies King George VI* as long as this was going to be a profitable venture. However, being a fairly small run, costs were going to have to be minimized. I wanted the book to be in colour – throughout (basically to denote the use of coloured ink in Bahamas, Jamaica etc) which wasn't very promising and all the quotes we received from various printers were not looking at all clever!

After the horrible Asian SARS epidemic of 2002–3 I left Singapore (by then a ghost town) to take up residence again in Shanghai – I set up my own ad-agency, Horrywood in Shanghai with mainly international hotels as clients – Howard Johnson, Carlson, Hilton, St. Regis, Renaissance et al. I launched New World Radisson hotel in downtown and with my Chinese wife, Lilian as production coordinator (Mandarin essential!) put a lot of material out for printing etc.

So why not print the book here in Shanghai? I knew a couple of printers well enough and 'Made in China' is de rigeur these days is it not?

Early in 2007 I got the quotes in and for once my eyes didn't water! The artwork was required in Adobe Pagemaker and Photoshop which was just what I had and it didn't take much time in persuading Murray Payne that the job could be done in China at about the third of UK costs and with colour. This allows it to be sold at a reasonable retail level, without breaking the bank. Similar books to this often retail at twice the price.

But, surely there were risks involved here.....but I felt confident that we could do a good job and have the quality I would expect back in the UK.

Meanwhile Derek Nathan had cast his eye over the British Guiana section; Bill Ashley had breathed some life into the Dominica section; Alan Fincham likewise on Jamaica and Ray Stanton and Ed Barrow added further information on Trinidad & Tobago. By now I had very few missing postmarks and I felt the book was about as far as I could get it.

The die was cast and I spent August doing final copy checks and worrying. Stuart was calm and the final quotes became firmed-up and a contract was signed with the Longing Printing Co. Ltd of Shanghai. Their representative the diminutive Miss Tan Wei-hong got on well with my ever trusty production controller, Lilian, even though neither of them knew the first thing about postmarks or cared much for them either!

The job started in September and in about three weeks I was delivered a dummy – 18 pages out of the 384 needed some attention and were re-laid out but it looked pretty good. After 10 years work on this tome it did all seem a bit anti-climactic – a touch of post natal-depression; Stuart & Co. were very supportive. The dummy went express-air to Somerset and Murray Payne gave the thumbs up. By October we had an agreed final copy and we had a month to print and deliver to the Shanghai dock-side ready for the sailing of on November 4th. We were told the boat would take around 21 days to get to Felixstowe.

I had a very pleasant surprise when I went over to the printers to witness the first time the ink hit the paper proper. The printing works was absolutely vast and absolutely spotless. I had visited several factories in China during my time as Executive Creative Director of Saatchi & Saatchi, China and this was a very well managed business. They had just installed a six Colour Heidelberg machine which appeared to be about 100 meters long; the book was printed on one of four Suzuki 4 Colour machines. I was impressed.

The next time I visited was to witness the first binding – each book was hand assembled and then strung up like bunting on a machine that looked like it was spinning silk. After about few minutes of string pulling the first book plodded through and was guillotined – all in Chinese!

I was presented with my first copy – (all in English) by Tan Wei-Hong and we were all smiles. Hung Hao as they say in these parts!

For me that was about it. I didn't attend the loading of the ship on November 4th. I kept 20 copies back in Shanghai, in case of disaster at sea and the rest of the shipment headed for Blighty. After a

bit of a tornado and plenty of red tape in UK the Encyclopaedias were delivered to Murray Payne in early December, while we handled payments back in Shanghai.

One copy went out to Ray Stanton for his perusal and reviewing purposes – he emailed to say he liked it – but there was a problem – a whole page of Jamaica TRDs had gone absent without leave. This omission had occurred some fifteen months before printing and there were also a few other errors. So that page had to be printed much to my chagrin. Updates and corrigenda will be posted in Sixth Sense, Murray Payne's bi-monthly house magazine.

The launch of the book was at Spring Philatex and I took the opportunity to fly back to London to sign copies for our first customers. Stuart and Dickon took copies to Madison Square Gardens New York in March and I also attended Westpex in San Francisco in April with copies.



Author with Iain Murphy of Murray Payne at Philatex

The initial response was very positive with the scarcity rating for every postmark being particularly noted as well as the usefulness of the maps (especially Jamaica) and the quality of the printing and paper. Ted Proud had a look and said well-done, which was praise indeed! And I have already had a few updates and new information from several collectors – as Mike Rego states 'publication breeds information.'

So what next? I have written the QEII section (1953–1965) but need a bit more illustration to finalise and then I'd like to have a crack at KGV. However, I am presently on the last lap of KGV Ceylon postmarks 1937–1955 which will be edited by Ray Stanton.

The Encyclopaedia of British West Indies Postmarks, King George VI by David Horry is published and available from Murray Payne at £39.95 + postage and packing.

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BWI**MME JOSEPH RIDES AGAIN...ON EBAY****BY CHARLES FREELAND**

Ed Barrow alerted me to an eBay seller offering fine quality stamps with fake cancels traced from the Ted Proud books, but with dates subtly changed. Ed had seen some Tobago QV stamps with cancels out of period, and with his expertise and sceptical mind, bells began to ring. We found that Mike Rego and I had each bought items from the same seller that on inspection of the originals turn out to carry faked Dominica cancels of Dublanc, Pointe Michel and Rosalie, and also Dominica and Montserrat GPO cds. They



must have been done on a laser printer because the ink does not bleed nor does it 'run' in water. However, only an expert or a sceptic would have been able to detect the fakes from the scans the seller provided unless he made some date errors, as in the case of the Tobago that Ed spotted.

My first action was to contact the seller, whose eBay ID was Hootstein, and enquire about the source of the stamps. He replied by return saying he bought all his material at auction, prided himself on the quality of his stock and offered to give me my money back. So I sent back most of my items (keeping the cheapest for reference) and received a cheque by return. I also put a message on our website and alerted the secretaries of the PTS and the BPA Expert Committee.



Initially I took the view that the seller was not necessarily the perpetrator as he had a 100% feedback rating and seemed surprisingly fast and open in his response, but I am now suspicious as he has since withdrawn from the eBay sales platform, or more likely has changed his ID. It is certainly regrettable for the collector of rare cancellations that a forger should move into this field. Mme Joseph modestly confined herself to the general post offices, but she operated in the days when village cancels were not so sought after or indeed known about. It is not easy to estimate how many 'Mme Joseph 2s' are in circulation but eBay records show that a number of dealers bought from this seller as well as private collectors. Some of the non-BWI items on offer by the same seller also looked suspicious although not being able to handle them I was unable to confirm my suspicions.



Ed suggests eBay bidders look carefully to check that the dates on nice used stamps are valid and keep in mind:

1. Sellers offering large numbers of fine used high values are suspicious. To find a £1 KGV value neatly cancelled with a GPO cds is hard enough, to find one cancelled with a cds from a smaller village post office is exceptional.
2. It is rare that a cancel is applied perfectly; usually the face of the cds hits the stamp at an angle so that some part of the cancel is lighter. In contrast those shown in Proud's books are touched up or taken from proofs in order to show the full cancel evenly struck.
3. When you examine the actual stamp it should be obvious from the ink texture whether the cancel was applied by a steel device – look for indentation, ink flow and seepage etc.
4. The fakes seen were likely scanned from the Proud books, with the dates partially altered. Thus the cancels bear a striking resemblance to Proud's and part of the dates match. Additionally, many of the images in Proud's books are hand traced and while fine for illustration are not exact replicates; these stick out like a sore thumb. If possible you are advised to compare with a genuine cancellation on a low value.


5.

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6.

BAHAMAS

SPECIAL DELIVERY STAMPS

BY IAN JAKES

Charles Freeland's excellent article in the March 2008 Bulletin certainly adds to our knowledge of these stamps. However, Charles' article does need comment and I do so as follows:—

- (a) Charles alleges that I am questioning the conclusions of Morris Ludington that the second printing of the Special Delivery stamps was issued in early December 1916. Ludington states "used examples (i.e. of the second printing) that have been seen have all been cancelled during 1917, at Nassau of course" and "thus the second printing must have been made and placed on sale.... **perhaps** at the beginning of December 1916." I do not consider that I am contradicting Ludington by suggesting that the second printing was being used some 5/6 weeks earlier on 20 October 1916.
- (b) Charles also asks why should a second printing stamp predate the recorded examples of the first printing. Ludington states "the usually agreed date of issue (i.e. of the first printing) was 1 May 1916". I am prepared to bet that there exists, or did at some time exist, a first printing stamp postmarked earlier than 20 October 1916.
- (c) Charles states "why..... should one assume that this (i.e. the cancellation of the stamp with a fictitious arrival stamp at the post office where Hess was known to have close associates) was done contemporaneously? This could have been done "by compliance" months later with the canceller back-dated accordingly". Charles and I agree that it is very likely that the infamous Dr. Walter Hess decided to embellish the cover by adding a Special Delivery stamp to it. On the balance of probability the cancellation was not back dated by reason of the following:—
 - (i) Ludington believes that the cancellation of the Special Delivery postal arrangement between Canada and Bahamas took place after 14 December 1916 and not later than 20 December 1916. One of the reasons for cancellation was that the Canadian Post Office learned that stamp collectors had successfully persuaded the Bahamas Government to make a further printing of the stamps which could be bought at Nassau Post Office. It is likely that Dr Walter Hess was one of those stamp collectors. It is also likely that Special Delivery stamps purchased by stamp collectors at Nassau Post Office would be stuck on envelopes and cancelled by the Nassau Post Office date-stamp.
 - (ii) So when did the practice referred to at (i) above commence? The answer is the date when the first second printing Special Delivery stamps were put on sale at Nassau Post Office being a date which can be calculated as follows:—
 - Date of issue of second printing
 - add: period of time for whistle-blower to find out about the practice
 - add: period of time for whistle-blower to report the practice to the Canadian Post Office
 - add: period of time for investigation of the practice including possible communications with the Bahamas Government
 - add: period of time for Canadian Post Office to make a decision as to what to do about the practice. This could have included consultation with the Canadian Government
 - add: period of time for the Canadian Post Office to communicate their decision to the various Canadian Post Offices and fix a date for cancellation of the Special Delivery postal arrangement.

The sum totals of these periods of time has to be a minimum 2/3 week period and quite easily an eight week period ending after 14 December 1916 and not later than 20 December 1916

- (iii) It is logical that the cover arrived in Bahamas on Wednesday 18 October 1916 and would have been received by Dr Hess on the Wednesday or Thursday when he would have dealt with the correspondence enclosed in the envelope. If the second printing had just been provided at the request of stamp collectors, it is also logical that Hess would have taken the empty cover to Nassau Post Office for the affixing and cancellation of the Special Delivery stamp on Friday 20 October 1916.
- (iv) 20 October 1916, the date of cancellation of the Special Delivery stamp on my cover, is likely to be a date shortly after stamp collectors had persuaded the Bahamas Government to make the second printing and at a time when the Special Delivery Service with Canada was working well. It is unlikely that stamp collectors would have requested a second favour i.e. the back dating of the cancellation at such an early stage.
- (v) Charles points out the back dating of another Hess cover cancelled in Nassau 16 (or 18?) December 1916. One of the Special Delivery stamps cancelled here was a third printing stamp which was not issued until March 1917 i.e. a date long after the Special Delivery arrangement with Canada had been cancelled and when stamp collectors would have been bolder to ask for Special Delivery stamps to be back-dated and when the Nassau Post Office would be happier to comply with requests for back-dating. After all, the third printing was made for philatelic purposes, and a request for back dating would be no big deal.
- (vi) As stated in my main article (Bulletin No. 215, December 2007 Page 13) if the cancellation was back dated it would surely have been to 18 October 1916 to match the arrival cancellation.
- (d) Charles states that Ludington advocates use of an accurate Thirkell position finder as well as a detailed description of the overprint settings for each of the three printings. The Thirkell position finder was essential to enable Ludington to prove that there were three printings of the first issue. The problem with Charles' statement is that Ludington only provides a detailed description of all the overprint settings for each of the 60 stamps (thirty different settings) for the first issue third printing. On six of the thirty overprint settings Ludington can provide details of the different settings for all three printings. On another twelve settings Ludington describes the settings for the third printing and one other setting which must be from either the first or second printing. Ludington states "some of the stamps.....might well be remainders of the first printing but have been **tentatively** assigned to the second printing because of their late dates of use". In other words it is not possible to state with any certainty in some cases based on our current knowledge even by using a Thirkell position finder, whether a stamp is from printings one or two. All it can do is identify, by plating the stamps, the position of the stamp on the sheet of 60 and Vignette 1 from Vignette 2. If two stamps are from the same sheet position with different overprints and are both from Vignette Plate I other means are needed, which frequently are not available, to distinguish the first printing from the second printing. Any stamp which can be positively identified as Vignette 2 (which is not from the third printing) is always a second printing.

This leaves 24 stamps (twelve settings) where details of the overprint settings for both the first and second printings are totally unknown. There are also another 12 stamps where the settings for either printings one or two are unknown. Hence Charles' comment about the stamp on my cover "the overprint slopes slightly upwards. This is very unusual in my experience..... I have never seen this stamp with this mild upward slope".

Ludington continues in respect of the first printing "the Canadian Post Office discovered..... that the stamps were being used for philatelic rather than legitimate business purposes" and "the Canadian Post Office cancelled the arrangement and ordered that the balance of the Bahamas stamps..... be sold in any way as soon as possible". On the balance of probabilities many of the reminders of the first printing were purchased by stamp collectors which means that the majority of the first printing ended up on the philatelic market. Some would have subsequently been put on covers bearing cancellations showing late dates of use.

If Sternfels is describing remainders from the second printing (see Bulletin No. 215, September 2007, Page 14) rather than remainders of the third printing, then very few of the second printing stamps ended up on the philatelic market.

Thus Ludington could just as easily have tentatively assigned stamps on cover to the first printing rather than the second printing because of their late dates of use.

Ludington also assigns a No. 21 mint single Vignette Plate 1 to the second printing when there is equal merit that it should be assigned to the first printing, since a second copy of No. 21 from printings one or two with a different overprint is unknown.

In short I am cautioning against treating Ludington's list of the second printing of the overprint as completely accurate.

- (e) Charles states that my conclusion that the stamp is a second printing, based on my judgment that the Vignette is grey-black and not the black shade of Vignette 1, is an unscientific conclusion as shades can be affected by light. I agree with this statement. Indeed, having now used a Thirkell position finder I am able to report that the stamp on my cover is Number 34 vignette 1. I still say that the stamp on my cover is a second printing.

STAMPS FOR COLLECTORS

ANGUILLA: 1967 1st Issue Black/White F/S photos of settings (25) ½c, 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 6c, 10c	£30
BARBADOS: 1946 Peace 1½d SG262a single ***	£20
BARBADOS: 1947 Provisional SG264 sheet 120 (part reconstruction) ***	£250
BERMUDA: 1893 QV SG 11 1/- BK V18 *** Blocks of 10 part reconstruction (50)	£325
BERMUDA: 1924 KGV 10/- BK G54a/b SG92 etc ** (2)	£175
BERMUDA: 1938 KGV 'SPECIMEN' BK SP11/16 2/-, 2/6, 5/-, 10/-, 12/6, £1	£950
BERMUDA: 1945 Air Letter	£18
BERMUDA: 1950/52 KGV 2/6 CWBK 22a sheet 60 (2 parts) ***	£995
BERMUDA: 1952 KGV £1 CWBK 26a SG121E L/R corner block 15 ***	£1800
BERMUDA: 1952 KGV £1 CWBK 26a SG121E L/L block of 8 ***	£700
BERMUDA: 1956 QEII Ocean Race 8d, 1s/3d sheets of 60	£30
BERMUDA: 1970 QEII 24c marginal block of 4 SG243w ***	£275

Postage Dues – Chalky Papers, each in sheet of 60

BARBADOS: 1c (D4a), 6c (D6a)	£50	TRINIDAD: 2c	£10
GRENADA: 2c	£15	TRINIDAD: 2c wmk error (D26ac)	£40
GRENADA: 2c wmk error (D15b)	£45	TRINIDAD: 6c	£15
GRENADA: 4c	£15	TRINIDAD: 12c	£20

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BELIZE / BRITISH HONDURAS**THE TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE****BY DAVID WATSON***Summary*

There was a steady change in postal markings as British Honduras changed its name to Belize and the country moved towards independence.

Replacement of 'British Honduras' with 'Belize' in circular postal datestamps was followed by the use of smaller type in some post office datestamps.

Official cancels, in many different formats, were used by a wide range of Government departments, many of which were using their own cancels in Belmopan, the new capital, before Belize achieved independence.

There was a growing variety of machine cancels. There were also new types of handstamps & registration labels.

Introduction

After British Honduras was renamed Belize, on 1 June 1973, several years passed before independence was achieved, on 21 September 1981. Little seems to have been reported on postal history during the transition to independence. The information below comes from 100+ items of official & other types of mail posted in Belize between June 1973 and May 1983. The 50+ different cancels & labels on these covers were too many to illustrate in this article, so the following information is provided:

- 1 Wording: reported in lower or upper case, italics or normal font – as found.
- 2 Colour: generally described as it was more difficult to judge cancels on half of the covers which were buff (the rest of the covers were white).
- 3 Size: diameter of outermost ring for circular cancels, or longest and shortest outer diameters for oval cancels.
- 4 Years in which cancels and labels were used are given in square brackets.

I am very grateful to Brian Rogers for his expert guidance in this initial study of what is clearly an extensive subject. It is proposed that this preliminary review is developed and expanded into a monograph. Please e-mail new information to me at: 'watson@waitrose.com.'

*Detailed findings***GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTAL CANCELS:**

These can be identified for departments in Belize City (Table 1), those that had moved to the new capital Belmopan (Table 2), or those sited elsewhere in Belize (Table 3).

Many of the Departments had their own very specific cancels. Others used one of the following three types of cancel:




		
# 1: round 2-ring; 50mm in diameter	# 2: oval 3-ring; 50mm x 30mm	# 3: round 3-ring; 44mm in diameter

FIGURE 1

Types #1, #2 & #3 Departmental cancels; registration labels with and without boxes;
 Receipt label for registered packet; & Type A cds for Belmopan.

Table 1 ImageTable 3 Image

Table 1: Government departmental cancels: Belize City

WORDING	DESCRIPTION
General Post Office Belize City, Belize C.A.	oval 3-ring (51mm x 35mm) in black [1978]
INCOME TAX OFFICE BELIZE	boxed (45mm x 22mm) in purple [1973]
INCOME TAX OFFICE BELIZE CITY	boxed (57mm x 22mm) in black or blue [1976/77]
Information Dept.	1 line (40mm) in purple [Feb. 1976]
INFORMATION DEPT. BELIZE CITY	# 2 cancel in purple or blue (reclining 'I' in INFORMATION) [Mar – Oct 1976]
Medical Department Public Health Bureau Belize City – Belize	3 lines (37mm 2 nd line – longest line) in blue [1976] – (see picture on p15)
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH Public Health Bureau BELIZE CITY, BELIZE	3 lines (64mm 1 st line – longest line) in black [1981]
MINISTRY OF TRADE & INDUSTRY BELIZE CITY	oval 3-ring (50mm x 34mm): all caps. (3mm high) in blue [Dec 1982]
NATIONAL PORT AUTHORITY BELIZE	# 2 cancel in black [1978]
SECRETARY WATER & SEWERAGE AUTHORITY	2 line cancel (35mm 2 nd line – longest line) in black or blue [1980/81/83]

Table 2: Government departmental cancels: Belmopan

WORDING	DESCRIPTION
ESTABLISHMENT DEPT. Belmopan, British Honduras	# 2 type of Govt. dept. cancel in blue [1973]
ESTABLISHMENT DEPT. <i>BELMOPAN, BELIZE</i> [40 mm long]	oval 3-ring in black, blue or purple: 50mm x 34mm [1974–80]
ESTABLISHMENT DEPT. BELMOPAN, BELIZE [29 mm long]	# 2 type cancel in blue [1981]
INFORMATION DEPT. BELMOPAN	# 2 type cancel? (dent in rings at right end) in purple: (vertical 'I' in INFORMATION) [1979–83]
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LANDS & CO-OP	# 2 type cancel in blue or purple [1973–76]
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LANDS & SURVEY	# 3 type cancel in purple or blue (in centre: BELMOPAN twice) [1978/79]
Ministry of Defence & Home Affairs Belmopan, Belize	# 3 type cancel in blue-black (in centre: O.S.G.B.) [1983]
Ministry of Finance & Economic Development	round 3-ring (in centre: BELMOPAN): 47mm diameter, purple or black [1978/79]; #1 type cancel in black [1983]
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS Belmopan, Belize	round 2-ring: 44mm diameter in black or purple (in centre: O.S.G.B.) [1981]

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS & HEALTH Belmopan, Belize	# 1 type cancel in purple (in centre: O.S.G.B.) [1978]
Ministry of Natural Resources Lands Survey & Forestry	# 3 type cancel in blue-black; <i>BELMOPAN BELIZE C.A.</i> across centre [1980/81]
Ministry of Social Services Labour & Local Government	# 3 type cancel in blue; BELMOPAN – BELIZE centre bottom [1978]
MINISTRY OF TRADE & INDUSTRY BELMOPAN	oval 3-ring (50mm x 32-4mm): all caps. (2.5mm high) in blue or purple [1973–78]; initial caps. in purple or blue (1979–Nov 82)
OFFICIAL PAID BELIZE	round 2-ring: 30mm diameter, carmine or purple ('Private Secretary' in centre) [1975/67]
OFFICIAL PAID BELIZE Secretary	round 2-ring: 34mm diameter, blue ('Secretary' in centre) [1982]

Table 3: Government departmental cancels: other locations

WORDING	DESCRIPTION
AGRICULTURE OFFICE COROZAL	boxed (78 x 15mm) two lines in blue [1982]
Chief Clerk STANN CREEK TOWN BOARD	two lines (2nd line: 51mm x 7mm): in black or purple [1978/79] – (see picture on p15)
CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT [around outside of ring] <i>BELIZE</i> [in centre]	round single ring: 32mm diameter (including text outside ring), blue-black [1978/80] cancelled at International Airport
DISTRICT OFFICER STANN CREEK	# 2 cancel in purple or blue [1974]
Ministry of Agriculture & Lands Central Farm	round 2-ring (44mm diameter) cancel in black or purple [1978–81] cancelled at Baking Pot
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES [in centre] Agric. Dept. Mechanical C/F Cayo	# 1 cancel in blue or black [1981] cancelled at Baking Pot
Ministry of Natural Resources Central Farm [all round inner edge]	round single ring (35mm diameter) in black [1981] cancelled at Baking Pot
NATIONAL METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE BELIZE	round 3-ring (46mm) in purple [1976] cancelled at International Airport

All of the Government Ministries named on covers in this study changed their titles over the next quarter of a century. Their current (2008) titles (from governmentofbelize.gov.bz) are as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Attorney General's Ministry | 7 Ministry of Home Affairs, Public Utilities and Housing |
| 2 Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries | 8 Ministry of Human Development |
| 3 Ministry of Defence, Youth & Sports | 9 Ministry of Labour, Education and Culture |
| 4 Ministry of Finance, National Development and the Public Service | 10 Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment |
| 5 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade | 11 Ministry of Tourism and National Emergency Management |
| 6 Ministry of Health, Local Government, Transport and Communication | 12 Ministry of Works |

MACHINE CANCELS:

Several new machine cancels appeared between British Honduras changing its name to Belize and independence. These were all for Belize City, Belize (in black; cds: 21mm diameter; time above date & month above year). Where there was a message in the cancel, the words were contained in a three-sided box. The following messages were found in machine cancels:

- 1 APARTHIED/ DENIES/HUMAN RIGHTS: in 3 lines [1978] – (see picture below)
- 2 B.T.A. CELEBRATES/WORLD TELECOMMUNICATIONS/DAY 17 MAY: 3 lines & picture of 'phone & radio mast [1978].
- 3 HELP TO PREVENT/BLINDNESS: 2 lines [1975].
- 4 REMEMBER TO/USE YOUR/RETURN ADDRESS: 3 lines [1978/80/82/83].
- 5 WE UNITE TO/BUILD A NATION: 2 lines [1981].

One 'blind' cancel was found in about a tenth of the covers. This was for Belize City: 3 sets of 7 wavy lines [found used in 1974/6/7/8].

**POST OFFICE DATESTAMPS:**

An apparently standard cds (in black; 27mm outer ring; 16.5mm inner ring; separators at the sides) was used. This was similar to Addiss type DC-3 for British Honduras, but with 'BELIZE' in place of 'BRITISH HONDURAS':

Type A – large letters (Figure 1):

- 1 Baking Pot, Belize [1978–83]
- 2 Belize City, Belize [1973–76/78/79/80/81/82]
- 3 Belmopan, Belize [1974–83]
- 4 Corozal Town, Belize [1978]
- 5 Dangriga, Belize [formerly Stann Creek; 1973/78/79/80]
- 6 International Airport, Belize cds [1978/80]
- 7 Mullins River [1982]
- 8 Orange Walk Town, Belize [1976/78]

In the early 1980s smaller type (2.5mm instead of 3mm) was used in the apparently standard cds:

Type B – smaller letters:

- 1 Belmopan, Belize [1982/83]
- 2 Corozal, Belize [1982]
- 3 Registration GPO, Belize [1981–83]

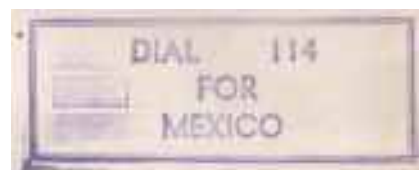
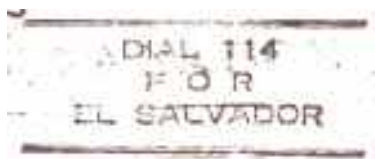
The most frequently detected cancels were Belize City & Belmopan type A cds, on about a third of the covers.

Based on datestamps, transit times were quite rapid:

- 1 1 to 2 days (Dangriga, formerly Stann Creek, to Belize City)
- 2 1.5 hours (!) to 2 days (Belmopan to Belize City)
- 3 1 day (Baking Pot to Belize City)

HANDSTAMPS:

- 1 'Dial 114 for El Salvador': black, 3 lines, with 45mm bars above and below [1981]
- 2 'Dial 114 for Mexico': blue, 3 lines, in box (19mm x 50mm) [1979/82]

**Labels:**

I found six different forms of label used on cover:

- 1 Similar to the type recorded by Matheson for Belize: registration label with box (33mm x 56mm) with cap. 'R' (8 mm high) on left-hand side & to right 'BELIZE' (15mm x 3mm) above 'No. 310583' (Figure 1) [1974].
- 2 No box on registration label 'Reg.' (sans serif; 3.5mm high x 9mm wide) gap (10mm) No. – (20mm) sometimes with hand stamped name of post office in purple or black capital letters – hand stamped at Belmopan (Figure 1), Dangriga & Orange Walk [1978–80], but not at Baking Pot.
- 3 As no. 2 but different font 'Reg.' (serif; 4mm high x 11mm wide) used at Baking Pot [1978].
- 4 Registration label with faint blue box (22mm x 55mm) with cap. 'R' (4 mm high) on left-hand side & to right 'No.' (4 mm high) 54674 & below 'BELIZE' added in black [1981].
- 5 Economy label [1978].
- 6 Receipt for registered packet: 40mm square – see Figure 1 [1974/76].

REFERENCES

- 1 E. F. Addiss (1990) *The "Town" cancels of British Honduras, 1880–1973*, BCPSG Monograph no. 10.
- 2 Matheson *Registration labels, handstamps and manuscript endorsements of British Honduras*, 'www.bcpsg.com/articles/registration labels by I Matheson.pdf'.



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BERMUDA**'PRAGUE' STUDY PAPER UPDATE****BY FRED LANG**

Illustrated below is a fine used example recently purchased by the author, dated 18 JUN 47B, with all the 'Prague' shade characteristics and matching in all respects three examples on registered covers to Prague 18 JUN 47, R No 6735 #13, R No 6737 # 17, & R No 6738 #14.

This is the second copy found off cover, which convincingly proves that the 'Prague' shade exists and some examples, exact quantity unknown, were indeed removed off two covers to Prague. In essence this convincingly disproves Wilson Wong's earlier theories and conjectures in the 1990s, and further, both substantiates and reinforces Dr. Myles Glazer's findings through both his exhaustive and extensive x-ray and chemical research and analysis on Prague covers, proving that these stamps are indeed genuine.



Recently found, Fine Used Example dated 18 JUN 47B now in the possession of the Author



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BRITISH GUIANA

LOST POST OFFICE FOUND

BY EDWARD PROUD

Regarding Michael Medlicott's reply in Bulletin No. 216, March 2008; firstly, "Cargoo's" address should be read as No.6 (The) House, i.e. the Plantation House? I have a sketch map of the numbering of the plantations on the Corentyne Coast, which shows No.6 (un-named) between New Amsterdam and Whim (No. 15) with Tarlogy as No.33.

This confirms my suggestions, viz:

- ECB1 at Fyrish, plantation No.6?, being a redesignation of CCB 1; if so, the last recorded date of use of the CCB 1 datestamp 2.11.69 probably should be 2.11.68?
ECB1 was transferred to Nigg in 1877? (ERD of use of D2, 1880);
- ECB2 at Whim, plantation No. 15;
- ECB3 at Tarlogy, plantation No.33;
- ECB4, No.50 (plantation No.50)

This fits into the system being used throughout British Guiana at the time.

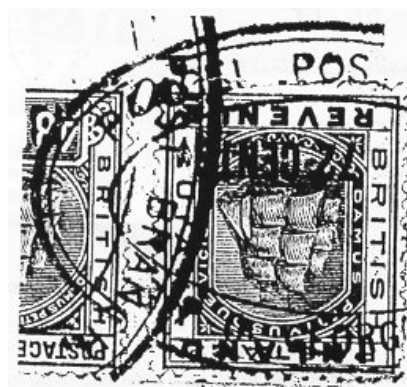
Michael Medlicott's comments on the use of the 'Crown Mark' for registration are not valid as the registration service was hardly used in any British Colony until after 1880. With the rigid control of Colonial expenditure, special marks for cancelling the few registered letters mailed would never have been authorised. If New Amsterdam needed an extra killer a cork would have been used. A set of undated marks with the name of the office and a crown was ordered by Penang with datestamps in 1873. The 'Crown mark' was only used by one office as a relief cancellation, so the intention must have been for non postal purposes, possibly to validate forms, etc. It may be that British Guiana ordered similar marks for the same reason?



PARCEL POST CANCELLATION

BY SIMON GOLDBLATT

I am pleased that David Druett has turned up another example of this little known cancel after all these years (See Bulletin No. 216, March 2008). As I mentioned when I first drew attention to its existence (See Bulletin No. 172, March 1997), one would take it for a fiscal cancel, unless one looks closely. There may be several members who have not spotted it within their holdings. I am sure anyway that there will be far fewer surviving than there are examples of the rather comparable POSTMASTER GENERAL instrument; and unlike the latter, the purpose of the parcel post cancellation leaves no room for debate.



MARINE DETACHMENT

BY CHARLES FREELAND

The overprints, on the first illustration on the front cover, may ring a bell with British Guiana collectors, who have long been familiar with the 'set' of six GVI definitives with a bogus 'marine detachment' (sic) overprint. A neighbour in Basel showed me a set of bogus overprints on Belgian Congo stamps, which the Belgian dealer who sold them told him emanated from Europe. They show not only the same incorrect spelling of 'detachment' but have very similar lower case lettering, although the capital Ds are a little different. My impression is that they both come from the same stable, so this would be the probable source of the British Guiana oddities.

My thanks to Charles Kennard for providing the British Guiana scan.



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JAMAICA

MYRTLE BANK TRD

BY KEITH MOH

I recently acquired the Myrtle Bank TRD, illustrated below, dated 16 February 1901 from a dealer in Spain.

This example seems different from others that I have seen – see examples dated 21 January 1901 (the EKD) and 16 Jul 1901. My 'Falls' example dated 1 February 1901 seems a lot more worn, even though the office only opened on 16 Jan 1901.

I contacted Bob Swarbrick and we both feel that the 16 February 1901 example was made by a different TRD, in use simultaneously with the one whose strikes are normally seen.

The sharpness of the lettering and the frame suggests that this strike was made within the first few days or weeks of the TRD's service. Bob determined that during the high tourist season, there were three Myrtle Bank Hotel mail collections each day, suggesting a high volume of mail and the plausible need for more than one TRD.

When in Jamaica, Bob spoke at some length with the postmistress at Negril PO, and asked her to cancel two previously addressed PCs, to obtain the postmarks. She asked which one he wanted, saying that, in high season, when the hotels were full, they tended to send all their mail to be forwarded to Kingston around the same time. She had asked for, and received, an additional dater to enable a part-time employee to be available to cope with the additional workload.

Could this also have applied to the hotel? It does seem extremely strange that this postmark has remained unrecorded for so long, food for thought?

Both TRDs were probably made by the same stationer, as the dimensions are almost identical. Because it is not a rare strike, perhaps other collectors have not focused on the examples in their collections.

I would like to make an appeal to BWISC members to send scans of their Myrtle Bank strikes, to the Editor, to determine whether others exist.



1 Feb 1901



21 Jan 1901



16 Feb 1901



16 Jul 1901

JAMAICA

RN VESSELS USED AS PACKETS DURING THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

BY PAUL HANCOCK

Thomas Foster (Ref. 1) and Leonard Britnor (Ref. 2) document the often extreme difficulties encountered throughout the Napoleonic Wars of safely delivering the mail to and from Jamaica. To the normal hazards of hurricane, shipwreck and the like were added the dangers of enemy action. The risks became even higher when the War of 1812 brought the United States into the conflict against Britain.

While the mail from the island was normally sent by regular packets, it was not an uncommon practice for individual letters to be handed for carriage to the captain of naval vessels returning from the West Indies to England. This practice was officially accepted and such items were treated as ship letters and charged accordingly.

Both Britnor and Foster, however, mention that on rare occasions, when there was a shortage of packets due to the capture of many regular vessels by the enemy, Royal Navy vessels were officially 'pressed' into service as packets.

Between February and July 1797 four packets (the PRINCESS ELIZABETH, SWALLOW, SANDWICH and CARTERET) were captured by French privateers. Britnor (Page 55; Ref. 2) records that as a result of the serious losses the mail was sent by the Royal Naval cutter WILLIAM PITT. Foster also records that in view of the lamentable record of recent years, the Admiralty were approached at this time and asked to provide a cutter which could sail with the mails to the Leeward Islands and Jamaica. He states this request was acceded to, but does not give the name of the vessel but it would appear probable that it was the WILLIAM PITT. He does, however, provide further information that this solution was ineffective as the cutter was itself captured on the return journey. This is substantiated by the Naval Chronicle (Ref. 3) which reports that 'the WILLIAM PITT, hired cutter of 14 guns, was captured on the 6 June, 1798 in the Bay of Gibraltar by a considerable number of Spanish gunboats'.

When I sent the first draft of this article to the editor I did not have an example of mail carried by the WILLIAM PITT. However, before receiving his feedback on the contents, I obtained such a cover from David Druett at Pennymead auctions. It is clearly dated 25 April 1798 and addressed to a Philip Perrin in London (Figure 1a). The contents are headed 'Dup of orig. sent by Chesterfield Packet' and the first paragraph reads "Having just heard of the capture of the Portland packet (N.B. stated by Foster to have been captured in February 1798) and there being some doubts with respect to the safety of the Boyd we now inclose a triplicate of our letter of the 8th December last by the former conveyances as well as a duplicate of our letter of 31st ult(?) by the Grantham packet". This provides very clear confirmation, if anything does, of the difficulties faced at this time in safely sending mails from Jamaica! It is rated 3 shillings and 4 pence (the London rate for a double letter introduced by the act of 1797). On the reverse is a clear London receiving stamp of 3 July 1798 (Figure 1b). This being difficult to reconcile with the evidence of the capture of the WILLIAM PITT, I was intrigued as to whether she had been recaptured by the Royal Navy (a not uncommon event), or whether for some, not obvious, reason the Spaniards had promptly forwarded the mail she carried to Britain. In trying to resolve this by undertaking further research in the Naval chronicle for 1798 I only added to the mystery. While there was no record of the recapture of the WILLIAM PITT there is an entry in the Plymouth report dated 2 July 1798 which states: 'Arrived late last night (i.e. 1 July) the CYGNET cutter in 6 weeks from Jamaica with the mails which were landed and forwarded directly to the General Post Office by express'. This would clearly tie in with the arrival stamp of 3 July. So were the mails carried not by the William Pitt but by the CYGNET (a cutter purchased by the Navy in 1796 and commanded by a Lieutenant Thompson of Plymouth), or were the mails being carried by the former transferred to the latter for some reason en route? (Ref. 4). Another example of mail carried by the WILLIAM PITT is illustrated on Page 172 of Britnor's book. I would appreciate any further information relating to the mail carried by the WILLIAM PITT or CYGNET that members are able to provide.

Figure 1a



William Pitt, 25 April 1798

Figure 1b

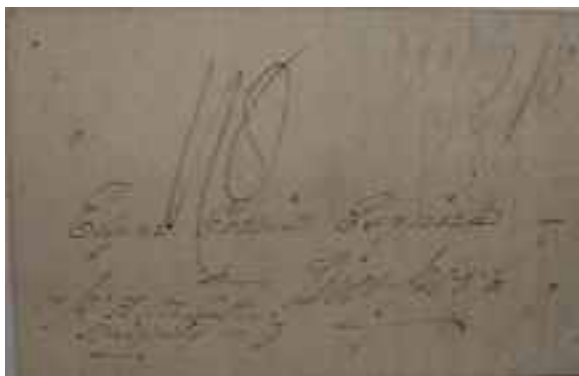


Figure 2



H.M. Sprightly, 16 July 1800

Figure 3



H.M. Sprightly, 1 August 1800

Figure 4

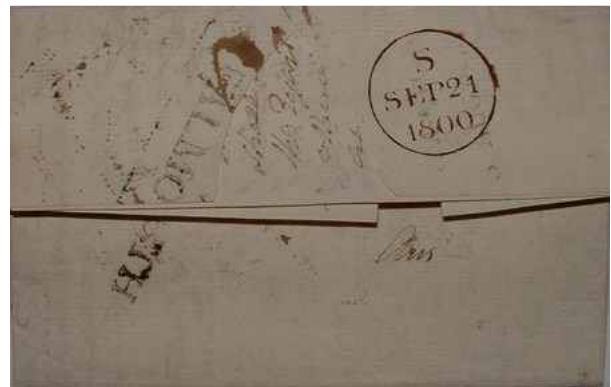
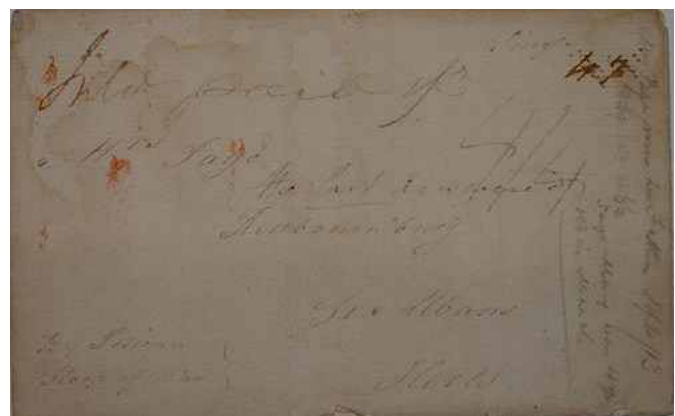


Figure 5



HM Crocus, 20 July 1810

Figure 6



HM Pelican, 23 April 1813

Britnor makes no mention of any other Royal Navy vessels pressed in this way but Foster, without citing his sources, suggests there were four further examples (pages 22, 23; Ref. 1). These are as follows:

1. HM Cutter SPRIGHTLY in July 1800.
2. HM Brig CROCUS in August 1810.
3. HM Sloop PELICAN in July 1813.
4. HM Schooner VESTA in 1814.

None of these were referred to in Britnor's subsequent book, and I am not sure if it is a comprehensive list or not.

In the late 1990s I bought an entire carried by HMS Pelican at a Pennymead auction without realising its significance. As result of my initial research I have sought to obtain examples of mail carried by the other 'pressed' ships. This has led to the writing of this article which I hope will help me gain further information from members as detailed below.

As my main collecting interest is the Jamaican numerical obliterations my observations on the packet rates are based on the charges listed in Foster and Britnor books. I fully appreciate that I am not an expert in this field.

The first of Foster's vessels to be pressed was the Sprightly. HM SPRIGHTLY was a cutter of 12 guns built in Dover in 1788. In 1800 she was 'captained' by Lieutenant Robert Jump and she successfully carried the Jamaica mail home. She was, however, captured by the French in the Mediterranean on 10 February 1801. Foster lists one example of mail carried by the SPRIGHTLY which was then in the collection of C.P. Patrick.

I have two SPRIGHTLY items in my collection. I purchased the first of these at a Caribbean Philatelic auction in 2007 (Figures 3 and 4). It is addressed to an Edgar Corrie Esquire at Liverpool and is clearly endorsed in the same hand 'p HM Cutter Sprightly'. The letter is dated 1 August 1800, headed Trelawney, Jamaica and the contents relate to the Dundee estate. The entire is rated 1 shilling and eight-pence on the front (from 1797 the packet rate to Falmouth was 1 shilling, and the inland rate to Liverpool was 8 pence.) On the obverse is a straight line 'Falmouth' type 2 handstamp, and a 21 September receiving stamp.

After purchasing this first example I carried out further research to ascertain more details about the vessel. I was surprised and pleased when the initial Google search brought up another entire carried by the Sprightly. This was for sale by an American coin and stamp company, Global Treasures and I subsequently bought it (Figure 2). The letter is dated 16 July 1800 and is headed St. Mary's, Jamaica. The sender's signature is illegible but it is addressed to a Mrs. Dickson care of Messrs. Simpson, P(?)itt and Harrison, Merchants, London. The cover is endorsed in manuscript '3 shillings and two pence' which represents the triple half ounce rate of 3 shillings and the 2 pence captain's levy. The cover has a very indistinct Jamaica straight line handstamp dated 3 August 1800. There is also a clear red London single ring receiving mark dated 21 September 1800, the same date as on the first example. The letter refers to the addressee's estate having had a good year. From these examples it is clear that, while the SPRIGHTLY may have been 'pressed' in July it could not have sailed until August.

The next Royal Navy vessel recorded by Foster as being used as a packet was HM Brig CROCUS in 1810. She was a 14 gun brig built at Plymouth in 1808 and at the time of her 'pressing' was captained by Lieutenant Richard Buck. Foster records one example carried by the Crocus as being known in the collection of L.P. Voller. I purchased my entire (Figure 5) from Michael Hamilton, who to the best of his recollection believes he obtained it as part of a purchase of the L.P. Voller collection. It would appear probable that this is the example referred to by Foster. The letter like the second SPRIGHTLY example is coincidentally addressed to a Mrs. Dickson. I am not sure if this is one and the same person, or indeed if it is part of a wider correspondence. The letter is dated 20 July 1810 and refers to appointing an agent for Mrs. Dickson's estate. The front is clearly endorsed 'p. HM Brig Crocus'. Rated 2 shillings (the rate to London introduced in 1805) the upper flap shows a fair Jamaica Fleuron dated 21 August without year (Type F2A) and bold / '21Oc21/1810' receiver. The letter is endorsed as being a duplicate of one carried by the packet NOCTON. The NOCTON was subsequently captured by in December 1812 by an American frigate off Brazil.

The third such vessel is HM Sloop PELICAN. She was a 24 gun vessel launched in August 1812 at Topsham in Devon and her captain was Commander John Maples. She was pressed to carry the Jamaica mail in July 1813. At this time the situation at sea was made far worse as the Americans had joined the enemies of Great Britain in the war of 1812. Seven packets (the NOCTON, the EXPRESS, the ANN, the MARY ANN, the DUKE OF MONTROSE, the LAPWING and the MANCHESTER) were captured by American privateers between December 1812 and June 1813 alone. For successfully carrying the mails Commander Maples received an award of 50 guineas from the Post Office. Foster does not record any letters carried by the PELICAN. As stated above I have an entire carried on this voyage, the letter itself is dated 23 April 1813 (Figure 6). The cover shows a light two line 'Morant Bay / Ja' handstamp, a light Jamaica fleuron a clear red London single ring receiving mark dated 4 June 1813. It is clearly endorsed 'by Pelican, sloop of war'. Rated 4 shillings and four pence (under the rate introduced in 1813 the London rate was 2 shillings and 2 pence for a single letter and increasing proportionately), with inland rate paid of 1 shilling and 3 pence. It is addressed to a Mr. Jago in St. Albans. The contents are very long and interesting making reference to hearing the news of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, and that when the French are beaten it won't take long to deal with the Americans! As an aside having delivered the mails, HMS PELICAN was immediately sent to Ireland where she met and defeated the USS Argus. This was a famous action which is recorded in a painting in the National Maritime Museum. For this success, Commander Maples (who had already fought with distinction at Copenhagen, the Nile and Trafalgar) was finally made 'post' i.e. became a full captain who in time could expect through seniority to become an admiral (Ref. 5).

I am aware of at least one other example carried by the Pelican. It was sold at Cavendish auctions on 11 April 2003. (Ref. 6) From the catalogue illustration it is clearly inscribed 'by HM Brig Pelican' and has a very rare 'PAID / to / ENGLAND' mark (Foster type PD1) on its front.

Foster's final 'pressed' vessel was HM VESTA in May 1814. She was a 10 gun schooner built in Bermuda in 1806 and in 1814 she was commanded by Lieutenant G.G. Mial. According to Foster one example of a letter carried by her is in the Customs House library. I have no knowledge of any others. I have checked with both Michael Hamilton and Steve Jarvis who, in their records, have no recorded examples of mail carried by the VESTA.

To conclude it would appear that neither the Britnor nor Foster listings are necessarily comprehensive. I would ask therefore if anyone knows whether there were any other such 'pressed' vessels, and whether members have any other examples of mail carried on the voyages I have included in this article. I would particularly like to see, and if possible purchase, any examples of mail carried by the CYGNET or the VESTA.

References

- Ref. 1 Postal History of Jamaica 1662 –1860 by Thomas Foster.
 Published by Robson Lowe 1968
- Ref. 2 The Sailing Packets of the West Indies by Leonard Britnor.
 Published by the BWISC in 1973
- Ref. 3 The Naval Chronicle by Stephen Jones and James Stanier Clark
- Ref. 4 Ships of the Old Navy by Michael Philips
- Ref. 5 The Fatal Cruise of the Argus by Ira Dye.
 Published by the United States Navy Institute in 1994
- Ref. 6 Cavendish Auctions West Indies and Worldwide Auction 11 April 2003

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BWI**BOOK REVIEW – HORRY – KGV I POSTMARKS****BY RAY STANTON****THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BRITISH WEST INDIES POSTMARKS (KING GEORGE VI) BY DAVID HORRY**

This is a most welcome addition to the bookshelves of all those interested in the postal history of the British West Indies but especially for that particular group of collectors who are interested in the postmarks of the area.

The book is compiled by David Horry, a member of the Study Circle, who will be familiar to many not least because of his columns in Gibbons Stamp Monthly, including those on the spoof stamps of 'Hedley Adams Mobbs' which complemented an earlier book published by Murray Payne, and who are also the publishers of this encyclopaedia.

The book endeavours to list, and provide an accurate illustration of, all the postmarks of the territories used during the reign of King George VI. Included here within the definition of postmarks are paquebot marks, and airmail, maritime and indeed other cachets. It does not extend to registration or postage due marks. Marks are listed in sibling groups rather than by office but there is an index for each country to enable marks to be found. Very usefully there are maps of each country showing the location of all the post offices known to have been open during the George VI period, and which are possibly the most comprehensive available for the larger countries such as Jamaica.

Postmark collectors have been well served of late by the Proud series of postal history books, which now cover all of the British West Indies, not to forget the earlier pioneer works by the likes of Townsend and Howe and many others. With the passage of time new information and new markings come to light but by now I think it can fairly be said that new finds will be few and far between. David Horry, however, has managed to add some fifty, not to mention many new early and late dates of use.

Perhaps the greatest bugbear of the postmark anorak's life is the inability to identify markings compared to handbooks, because of inaccuracies in the drawing, particularly when comparing very similar items. Here all the illustrations, with only a very few exceptions, are scanned copies of originals, computer enhanced. This is a great step forward and provides new certainty. There is also a very useful self help guide to enable postmark collectors to use computers to scan and 'lift' postmarks away from the stamp itself. I wonder what the postmark pioneers would have thought of this technology.

Another feature of the book is the use of a descriptive classification of the postmarks eg LSC for large single circle, RO for registered oval. This is then applied across all countries so avoiding the confusion arising from different type numbers and letters being used in each country by previous writers. This of course will inevitably infuriate some single country collectors who have been weaned on their particular country's favoured classification, as indeed did the Proud series which just uses the same letters and numbers for each office.

There is a rarity scale for each mark priced on a general scale across all territories according to cover, stamp or piece. However the rarity scale only applies to use within the period of the encyclopaedia which is sometimes confusing as the dates will be slightly different for each country depending on when KGV I stamps were replaced. In Jamaica this is seen as being the 13 August 1956 when many of the new single circle datestamps were issued, although the first QEII definitives were actually issued in May of that year i.e. both dates well after the death of King George. In British Guiana the period runs to 1 December 1954 and in Trinidad to 20 April 1953.

This to my mind is the only caveat I have to the usefulness of the book. It is confusing to see a mark rated as rare in KGV I period when it might be common either before or after, although to be fair a warning on this is to be found on most pages. In other words you have to be careful and continually bear this in mind when assessing material, but this apart there are many reasons why this book would be an excellent library addition for any member who has any interest at all in this collecting area.



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MINUTES OF THE 54th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BWISC (April 2008)
HELD AT 2:15 PM SATURDAY 19 April 2008

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was opened by Peter Ford, who extended a warm welcome to the 27 members present and thanked Spink for allowing us to use their superb premises. Peter reminded everyone that there would be a meeting at Autumn Philatex, with Paul Wright displaying Jamaica but Members are also asked to bring along cameo displays.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Victor Toeg, Peter Boulton, Bill Gibb and Kevin Darcy.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the previous meeting on 28 April 2007, as published in Bulletin No. 213, June 2007, pages 27 to 33, were accepted by the attendees.

4. REPORT BY THE HON. GENERAL SECRETARY (PETER BOULTON – READ BY PETER FORD)

The membership now stands at a total of 354, of which 239 are UK members and 119 are overseas members. This shows a net increase of 8 compared with last year. Three members resigned and 16 members were removed due to failure to pay their Subscriptions, even after reminder letters. However, we have now gained 27 new members, which more than replaces the losses. The membership database is working satisfactorily and is continuously being updated. Changes of addresses etc. and new members' details are recorded as a supplement to each issue of the Bulletin. Individual member's details are recorded on the back of the Bulletin address label for each December issue, to enable them to be checked. Members are urged to let the Secretary know about any change of address as soon as possible, otherwise they may miss an issue of the Bulletin.

I have been carrying out the job of Honorary Secretary of the Circle since April 1997, when I took over after the untimely death of the previous secretary, Michael Nicholson, I now feel that it is time for me to retire and let a younger person take over. I would like to offer my full support to my successor, Charles Gee and wish him and the BWISC every success in the future.

Report accepted by the meeting.

5. Report by the Hon. Editor (Steve Jarvis)

I am pleased to report that my appeal last year, for more articles has borne fruit and I usually have enough material to allow me to take decisions on content, to provide reasonable balance. It is especially gratifying that new authors have come forward and I try to give them priority for incorporation. However, an Editor is always nervous about the next edition and I appeal to you all to submit material. I often need half, one or two page items to provide variety and fill up the 40 pages precisely. New authors should be reassured that I will endeavour to provide advice and identify information sources to help them finalise their contributions.

My usual thanks to Charles Freeland, whose review work and advice contributes significantly to the quality of the Bulletin. However, I will continue to ignore his disparaging comments regarding Jamaica articles and incorporate them regularly as befits the most collected territory!

Sarsen Press continue to provide an excellent service, investing in new technology for low print runs like ours, which helps to keep the unit costs down. They have indicated that there may be further changes this year, which would enable us to go to full colour at no additional cost; I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

The new ISP for our web site has provided a stable service and further content has been added. Peter Fernbank has completed scanning/OCRing our Bulletins, so they are all available for on-line research, either via his cumulative index or the new search facility. I am always looking for more content, so please send anything to me, even if it is only consolidations of previously published works or work-in-progress research.

I have also experimented with an email newsletter and plan to supplement the Bulletin with alerts and news which would be out of date by the next edition.

Time flies. I took over as Editor in June 2002 (against the advice of my wife), but I'm pleased to say that after five years I am still enjoying producing the Bulletin and she is reconciled to our conservatory turning into a despatch depot every 3 months.

Derek Nathan and Peter Ford both expressed their appreciation for the work undertaken and the resultant product.

Report accepted by the meeting.

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE**INCOME STATEMENT : YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2007**

	<u>£'s</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>£'s</u>	<u>2006</u>
INCOME :				
Subscriptions		3,710		3,659
Publications – Sales less commissions		1,667		2,807
Auction and other donations		1,533		1,370
Interest received		80		4
TOTAL INCOME		6,990		7,840
EXPENDITURE :				
Bulletin Costs less advertising	947		783	
Distribution and editorial expenses	1,575	2,522	1,539	2,322
Publications: Printing costs	1,864		1,927	
Publications Distribution	4		90	
Printer depreciation	470	2,338	470	2,487
Leamington Convention – net deficit		110		–
Library – Books and expenses		–		–
ABPS affiliation fee		140		137
Officers administration – Stationery, postage, telephone etc		130		75
Bank charges		5		6
Website		81		68
		5,326		5,095
SURPLUS EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME	£'s	1,664	£'s	2,745

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2007**ACCUMULATED FUND**


Balance at 1st January 2007	2,719	174
Add: Surplus for the year	1,664	2,745
Dollar conversion profit (loss)	(36)	(200)
£'s	4,347	£'s 2,719

REPRESENTED BY:

Printers (net of depreciation)	–	470
Cash at banks	5,302	6,377
Debtors – amounts due to us	5,271	1,924
	10,573	8,771
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(2,807)	(2,884)
Loan	(2,500)	(3,000)
Other creditors – Amounts due by us	(919)	(168)
	(6,226)	(6,052)
£'s	4,347	£'s 2,719

AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the income statement for the year ended 31 December 2007 is in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheet at the 31 December 2007 shows the financial state of the British West Indies Study Circle as at that date.


J G M Davis FCA (Not in practice)

6. Report by the Hon. Treasurer (Ray Stanton)

I have pleasure in reporting that the Study Circle has generated a surplus of income over expenditure in 2007 of £1,664 which means that once again we have a reasonable cover going forward for our activities.

Income from subscriptions has increased slightly and more than continues to fully cover, along with advertising receipts, the cost of producing and distributing the bulletin, although that cost has increased by £200 over 2006, and will probably increase again in 2008.

Income from the Study Circle auction continues to be an excellent source of funds and exceeded even that of the previous year. Income from publications this year amounted to £1,667 which was less than last year and did not fully cover the amount spent during the year. Nevertheless because of the surpluses elsewhere

we are in a position to continue with our accounting policy of writing off expenditure in the year incurred. The capital cost of the printer has now been completely written off which will relieve publications of this expense in future years.

With regard to expenses, we have again saved on meeting room expenses due to the generosity of Harmers in 2007 which is being continued by Spink in 2008 with our grateful thanks. There was a small deficit of £110 arising from our convention at Honiley but I am sure all who attended will think that this was money well spent.

I would like to thank John Davis again for being our auditor and for the advice and help he has given.

A query was raised in the meeting concerning the debtors amount owed of £5271. Ray explained that this was payments not received by the 31 December cut off but that most of this amount had now been received.

Proposed: C Freeland, Seconded: D Nathan, Accepted by the meeting.

7. Report by the Hon. Librarian (Ian Jakes)

There has been a loan of 19 books to 8 members during the year. This compares with a loan of 9 books to 5 members during the year ended April 2007.

Three members have requested information contained within the Library. In addition a non-member requested information from the Library relating to Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. This non-member has now provided information on an item in his possession relating to Royal Mail Steam Packet Company for publication in a future bulletin.

One member has requested a Library list. One member unmasked Barclays Bank International as being the donor of the copy BBI collection which was donated to the Library. Murray Payne Limited requested information from the Library relating to the designers of the Barbados 1950 King George VI set. I responded to this request and solicited the additional help of Edmund Bayley, our member in Barbados who provided further information.

Derek Nathan has today donated to the Library the following 15 books and a copy of his joint display of British Guiana to Royal Philatelic Society London:-

- A History of the Guyanese Working People 1881–1905 Walter Rodney
- British Guiana and British Honduras Economic Survey Barclays Bank 1956
- Experiences of a Demerara Magistrate des Voeux 1948
- Atlas for Guyana & Trinidad & Tobago Macmillan
- The London Philatelist May 1950 (Postmarks of BG)
- The Post Office in BG before 1860 Rodway 1890
- Display of BG to RPSL Greenwood & Nathan 2000
- The London Philatelist Dec 1950 (more)
- Decade of Decision Ramphal 1970
- British Guiana – 1924 Exhibition
- British Guiana 1958 Land of Opportunity
- The Beginnings of British Guiana Darnell Davis
- Jungle Peace William Beebe 1918
- BG Village Administration 1903
- Voyage to the Demerary Bolingbroke 1947
- The Making of Guyana Daly

Report accepted by the meeting.

8. Report by the Hon. Publications Officer (Peter Ford)

Due to circumstances beyond our control, we only published one book last year, and that was Volume 2 of Mike Rego's Steamship Lines to the Caribbean. I have passed on drafts of Volume 3 to our proof readers, so hopefully it won't be too long before that is published. The year saw a slight drop in sales with the best selling being Richard Maisel's booklet on his Cayman Islands collection; this sold some 36 copies (this was in addition to the 100 we sold to Shreves auction house). The next best seller with 17 copies sold was our revised Montserrat the previous version of which had sold out. Next in line was the British Guiana Postcards book which sold 12 copies. Of the other titles in our stock, no others sold more than seven copies. Gross sales brought in £2,154; this, after commission, netted £1,667.

Needless to say, there are other books in the pipeline, the most immediate of which is our long-awaited book on Trinidad. We have a tentative agreement with the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group for them to help finance the publication of this book which we are hoping to have in hardback. Also ongoing is John Davis's War Tax book; again we are having to look outside for financial help with this one and the British Philatelic Association has indicated its willingness to assist. I am hoping to have a draft to them by the end of the year with publication late next year.

As I did last year, I am appealing to our membership to think of writing a study paper similar to the Bermuda Censorship one we published a couple of years ago. The subject should be one on which little has been written before and can be on a very narrow aspect of BWI philately. I firmly believe that this sort of publication, which is relatively easy on the pocket for buyers, can only help to bring new collectors to the Circle as members.

I have now been doing this job of Publications Officer for the Study Circle for over ten years and, whilst I am happy to continue for now, it would help greatly if another member of the Study Circle could volunteer to take

over some of the work, preparatory to taking over. Although time consuming, it is a really satisfying job, one which has, as its end result, something as solid as a book.

Report accepted by the meeting.

9. Report by the Hon. Public Relations Officer

None – Post vacant.

10. Report by the Chairman of the Committee (Peter Ford)

The last year has been one of continued success for the Study Circle with our Bulletin going from strength to strength and our Annual Auction yet again proving to be popular amongst members and a vital contributor to our funds. Our website continues to expand with the Archive of Bulletins now complete, for which we have Peter Fernbank to thank, Charles Freeland's continuing updates on the auction scene providing useful information to those of us not in the know about these things and, of course, Steve Jarvis's continued monitoring keeping us up-to-date on all things pertaining to WI philately. According to our supplier, we have been receiving between 6,000 and 13,000 'hits' per month; so if anyone hasn't visited it yet, it may well be well worthwhile doing so.

We now are in the early stages of planning for the 2010 LONDON Show. The exhibition will run from Sat 8 to Sat 15 May 2010 at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, Islington, London. For those of you new to the Circle, this occasion provides an opportunity for us to have special functions usually in co-operation with the BCPSG, our American sister society. We usually try to hold our AGMs at the time, hold a combined auction, maybe have special displays and, last but not least, hold a social function at around the same time. Steve Jarvis is liaising with Ed Waterous and nothing definite has yet been decided but the membership will be kept informed via both the website and the Bulletin; it may be a good idea to try to keep those dates in 2010 free.

As usual, I have to thank my Committee for all their support and hard work over the last year, but this year I have to mention one particular member who is relinquishing his post. That person is Peter Boulton, our Hon. Secretary. After the untimely death of the then Hon. Secretary, Michael Nicholson in November 1996, Peter generously allowed himself to be co-opted onto the Committee and took over the position. He was formally voted in at the next AGM in April the following year. Peter has worked tirelessly for the last 11 or so years taking minutes at both the Committee Meetings and at the Annual General Meetings, maintaining a database of members and also arranging the biennial Convention as well as other meetings. Without such volunteers on the Committee, the Study Circle would be much the poorer, and it is with this in mind that the Committee has this morning decided to award Peter Honorary Life Membership of the Study Circle.

Time moves on and we have been fortunate to find a replacement for Peter; Charles Gee has volunteered to take over as Secretary. Unfortunately he is not able to be present today but some of us met him and his wife at Honiley last September and feel we can recommend him for the post.

We look forward to another successful year ahead and would appeal to members to consider helping with the running of the Circle, particularly as we shall probably be looking for new Study Group Leaders in the not-too-distant future.

Report accepted by the meeting.

11. RE-ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

Peter Ford was re-elected unanimously.

12. RE-ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The President, Vice-Presidents, Hon. Officers and Messrs. N Chandler, P Fernbank and M Hamilton have all agreed to continue as members of the Committee. There were no further nominations, consequently, all are automatically re-elected.

Charles Gee had volunteered for the position of the Hon. Secretary, his appointment was proposed by Nigel Chandler and seconded by Simon Goldblatt and passed unanimously.

Nigel Chandler had volunteered for the post of Hon. Public Relations Officer, his appointment was proposed by Steve Jarvis and seconded by Ron Cronin and passed unanimously.

13. ELECTION OF THE HON. AUDITOR

John Davies has agreed to continue with this role.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

MONTserrat

REGISTRATION MARKINGS

BY PETER TRIBE

I have been interested in Montserrat postal history for some time but have found a number of inconsistencies in the three reference books available – 'Montserrat' by L.E Britnor as updated by Charles Freeland and in the 'BWISC Bulletin' (B), 'The Leeward Islands, Notes for Philatelists' by M.N. Oliver (2000) (O) and The Postal History of the Leeward Islands by E Proud (2005) (P).

Here I would like to try to get to grips with the various registration cachets and labels in use from 1885 and suggest the classification below.

Several of the labels are quite similar but I believe them to be sufficiently different to be worth a separate classification. Within the types differences in print colour of either the box or numbers are evident as is the positioning of the wording within the box but I think they are essentially of the same type unless listed here. With the dating the letter in brackets refers to the source – examples from my own collection I refer to as (T). All the illustrations are from my own collection. Size in mm.



Type RM1: Proud.– R2 (Two versions identified by Proud)

Size: 21 wide x 26 high

EKD (P) 14 Feb 1885 LKD (T) 25 Mar 1936

[Example from cover dated 1903]



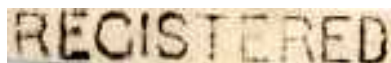
Type RM2: Proud R4 / Britnor Type 1

Size: 21mm wide x 26mm high

EKD (P) 17 Apr 1930. In occasional use for the next 20 years and then in regular use from 1953–56. LKD (T) 1 Jun 1956

[Example from cover dated 1948]

As these two marks are the same size they are difficult to tell apart unless the strike is clean. The most noticeable difference is the area enclosed by the loop of the 'R' which is rather more in Type RM2. Proud suggests that the sub post offices of St. Johns and St. Peters had a separate mark such as this but they appear to be the same to me.



Type RM3: (B Type 2)

Size: 49 x 6

EKD (T) 30 Oct 1900 – LKD (B) 16 Feb 1929



Type RM4: (B Type 4)

Size: 39.5 x 16; Perf 13.5

EKD (T) 25 Jul 1908 – LKD (T) Certainly 4 Apr 1913 but possibly 1? Oct 1913 or 1916? Postmark unclear



Type RM5: (B Type 3)

Size: Outer lines 40 x 14

EKD (B) 28 Jan 1909 – LKD (B) circa 1921

**Type RM6:** (B Type 5)

R particularly heavy

Size: 40 x 16; Perf 13.5

EKD (B) 15 Feb 1914 – LKD (T) 19 Dec 1932

**Type RM7:**

Similar to RM6 but R and whole label has a very clear image

Size: 40 x 16; Perf 13.5

EKD (T) 27 Feb 1914– LKD (T) 28 Mar 1914

**Type RM8:**

Similar to RM6 and 7 but R has a fuzzy image and in slightly clearer examples serifs do not touch border.

Size: 40 x 16; Perf 13.5

EKD (T) 20 Feb 1916 – LKD (T) 31 Mar 1917

**Type RM9:** (B Type 6)

Again similar to RM6, 7 and 8 but rough perf 8.5

Size: 40 x 16

EKD (B) 23 Jan 1916 – LKD (B) 12 Nov 1921

**Type RM10:** (B Type 7)

Size: 40 x 16; Perf 13.5 x 14.5

EKD (B) 1919 – LKD (T) 2 Aug 1932

**Type RM11:**

as above but with MONTSERRAT (PLYMOUTH) set consistently left in box

Size: 40 x 16

EKD (T) 6 Jun 1930 – LKD (T) 20 Feb 1931

**Type RM12:** (B Type 7A)

Size 40 x 16; Perf 11

EKD (B) 11 Mar 1929 – LKD (T) 2 Aug 1929

**Type RM13:** (B Type 7B)

Straight sides.

Size: 38.5 x 15.5; Perf 11.5 Top and bottom

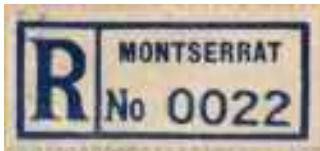
EKD (B) 20 Jan 1933 – LKD (T) 6 Jan 1934

**Type RM14:** (B Type 8)

(Short serifs)

Size: 39 x 16; Perf 12.25, top and bottom

EKD (B) 7 Jun 1935 – LKD (T) 15 Mar 1952



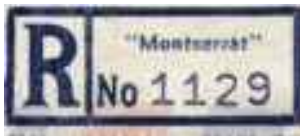
Type RM15: (B Type 9)
(Long serifs)
Size: 38 x 15; Perf 13.5, top and bottom
EKD (T) 4 Jan 1935 – LKD (B) 30 Jun 1956



Type RM16: (B Type 9A)
Size: 40 x 15.5
EKD (T) 24 Jul 1959 – LKD (T) 19 Dec 1970

As regards the registration labels from the sub post offices I have no information to add to that which has already been printed in (B) except for Harris – Britnor Type 11 EKD (T) 27 Mar 1931.

The following labels are of more recent use of which I only have a few examples.



Type RM17:
In use 14 Nov 1973



Type RM18:
In use 10 Apr 1975 – 12 Mar 1976



Type RM19:
(Thin border rule)
In use 22 Aug 1977 – 9 Jan 1978



Type RM20:
(Thick border rule)
In use 13 Mar 1980 – 9 Mar 1982



Type RM21:
(Thick border rule – MONTSERRAT in capitals).
In use 19 May 1981



Type RM22:
In use 18 Nov 1985

**Type RM23:**

Hand stamp in both black and purple
In use 29 Sep 1986 – 1 Sep 1989

**Type RM24:**

(Numbers in heavy type).
In use 1 Oct 1987

**Type RM25:**

(Rules often cropped left and right)
Handstamp 69 x 13
In use 19 Jul 1991 – 19 May 2005

**Type RM26:**

(Numbers in light type).
In use 22 May 1992 and 6 Jan ? (Year missing in slug)

**Type RM27:**

Hand stamp in use 23 Oct 2003 – 19 May 2005

Inevitably this list is not exhaustive and there may be other types or uses, particularly date extensions that come to light. I would be grateful if members could provide any further information as to their use [ptribe@tiscali.co.uk].

MONTSERRAT

SG 1 ISSUE DATE

BY CHARLES FREELAND

In Bulletin No. 215, December 2007, David Watson illustrated a Montserrat cover dated 15 August 1876 and bearing three 1d stamps, with three further stamps evidently missing. I have since come across a photostat I received from a dealer in 2003 that shows the selfsame cover, but there were no stamps on it at that time and it was being offered as a pre-adhesive. I declined to buy it on the grounds that stamps were missing. David authenticates the present partial franking by noting an 'albino impression of the AO8 canceller in the part of the cover under the lifted strip of 3'. If that is so, someone has been extremely fortunate in locating the missing strip!

Regardless of the authenticity of this franking it is evident that there were stamps on the cover so the acceptance by the SG catalogue editor of the early date looks justified.

MEMBERSHIP BOOKLET

The Membership Booklet is now being updated every quarter and a copy is to be placed on our web site in the 'Membership' section for downloading and printing. A user-id and password is required for access, it is the same as for recent Bulletins, details can be supplied by request from the Web-Master info@bwisc.org.

A printed copy can be supplied upon application to Hon. Editor accompanied by an S.A.E. (9" x 6½") – 2nd Class postage for up to 100 gm rate required.

BWISC AUCTION REPORT 2008

Statisticians are familiar with the bell curve. In Circle auctions, the bell is turned upside down. The catalogue comes out, there is a reactive flurry of bids, then activity sinks to ground level, surging up again (or so the auction team hopes) in the last few days before the event.

2008 ran exactly to statistical form. So spare a thought for the anxious auctioneer, a week before the sale, with less than a quarter of the lots attracting bids on the book.

By what magic, or process of collective telepathy does this transmute into a sale where five lots in every eight find a willing purchaser, and turnover rises by over 20% on the year before? We don't have the answer, only the results.

Yet there is another curious constant. Year after year, almost exactly a third of the membership participates. Which means that two-thirds do not – this is a stamp Circle which runs its annual auction with a professionalism that leading traders admire or even envy. Well, can we persuade half our members to take part, for a change? Don't bet on it!

This is not a whinge, be it said. There are regular participants. There are occasional ones. There are virtual one-offs, either as buyers or sellers; and even when the patronage of a former major buyer or seller is lost, another steps in to take the statistical place. The first time that an auction lot broke the three-figure barrier, there was applause from those attending: this year about one lot in every dozen sold, went up to and beyond that level.

There is a parallel statistic that matters just as much to the auction team. About one lot in every eight sold for single figures. Very few of our members are Olympian philatelists, and the auction sets out to cater for us all. The criterion is character and interest, more than actual value. Whilst an average purchaser may pick up four or five lots, each averaging about £40, no member should find the auction wholly out of reach.

The last of our current statistics is unquantifiable. It relates to the members who take and read the catalogue for enjoyment, irrespective of whether they sell or buy. The descriptions aim both to entertain and enlighten, and from annual feedback, this is what they do. Our members are spread evenly around the world, and only a proportion can actually view – but we think that many more absorb from our annual sale a familiarity with collecting within the BWI that cannot readily be picked up elsewhere. So perhaps half our members also participate after all.

It is time to put the flesh on the Sale, and we begin with the weaklings. Anguilla, Barbuda, Dominica, St. Lucia, Turks and surprisingly, Leeward Is. were represented together by 120 lots, and of these only 47 sold. Of course, the Leeward Is. mixture ran a little rich, with its profusion of plate numbers. Coming, as we did, shortly after Mike Spaven's glamorous dispersal at Grosvenor, we were offering items that several of those who enjoy this aspect of collecting already own, while most of us have yet to recognize the premium value that now attaches in this area. It should be said, too, that there have been several late sales of Turks or Leeward Is. lots. Assessing sales against the character and quality of what was on offer, perhaps only Dominica was in the doldrums – and even there, a breath of breeze could be said to have stirred.

In contrast, there was a wholly unexpected front runner. This was Bahamas. 37 lots were listed and a week before the sale, there were book bids on just three. Come the day, and only four were left unsold. Here was a real turn-around. In previous years, high quality post mark offerings have gone unsold. This year the membership balked only at the valuation for 'ROSES' (lot 57). On this one, the auction team agrees to differ.

It has nevertheless to be conceded that the valuations for 2008 lacked their customary precision. Across the board, they were several % under realisations. As sellers would be happy, and buyers content, only the auction team felt a little chastened. It is not as if the differential can be shrugged off on our starred frontispiece (lot 106) which went for £280 above its citation of £500 – the cricketer suddenly groomed for stardom, and just as abruptly dropped. Neither would the £420 paid for the British Guiana set featured in our back spread, against £300 valuation explain it. Lot 109 of Barbados (sold for £105) was a better exemplar, where the £30 valuation featured condition over content. Or else one could instance the run of Antigua manuscripts (lots 13 to 17) estimate £104, sale price £171.

Quite often, when prices soar, St. Vincent is the key. This year, an uplift of £136 on estimates approaching £4,000 could be more than accounted for by the single postmark collection, when lot

578 realised £540 against estimate £350. The real difference, however, can be seen in Jamaica. There were 56 lots. Four fifths were sold. Estimates approached £1,200. Prices paid were 40% higher.

We conclude that the publication of the emergent volumes of the Encyclopaedia, has produced resurgence of interest not really seen since the late Charles Winand dropped out of the competition in the Circle. One wants to feel that the resurgence is here to stay. Never mind the popularity of Barbados and St. Vincent. It has to be conceded that there is more depth to the collecting of Jamaica than to any other of our BWI territories. Remarkable, really, in a country where Queen Victoria sports four different watermarks, and every face is the same.

Special mention, anyway, should be made of the very special Annatto bay cover, lot 330, sold for £350. The estimate of £180 took into account that Tom Foster did not know it at all, but only served to prove that the auction team knew a lot less.

There were, nevertheless, instances of very close correspondence. Indeed, in the case of one seller with a four-figure turnover, estimate and realisation were just £1 apart. Book buyers in a number of cases came rather closer to their limits than is often the case: the auction opened with the announcement that there were no fewer than 17 tied bids on the book, and it was for Room bidders to untie the knot, if they chose. So at the end there was less than £4,000 to spare against overall book capacity. A handsome margin, no doubt, but much of it attributable to comparatively few lots. A graphic example was of a book bid of £130 on an item which sold for less than £20. The team is happy to be trusted with what are to all intents and purposes 'buy' bids. These are never abused.

Yet £200 looked like a 'buy' bid on the Cayman Is. Official Paid cover, lot 260, est. £40. It was not enough, for a room bidder paid £210. The catalogue emphasised its rarity, whilst the estimate cautioned for moderation. In this case one understands why the caution was ignored.

All in all this was a Sale which showed that both the BWI and the Circle are in good health; and with an accumulation of after-sales, total realisation is over £18,000 at the time of this report. Auction policy has consistently been to try and offer material and realise sales at levels which are fair both to members selling and to members buying. Yet one has to recognize that the level of realisations has been creeping up. One gets the feeling that those who sell often take the view (all the more so with the Circle's low commission on sales) that our annual auction is the best available forum for their disposals, rather than a simple passing on of collectibles and collecting information to fellow members; while the acquiring members accept the creeping uplift because the auction team sets out to describe what it sees and handles, and the buyer ordinarily reckons to get what is described. We probably have as low a level of returns as any auction organisers could reasonably contemplate, even allowing for the customary benevolence towards the Circle that comes from being a member.

A few items only are left for individual mention: Lot 91 (Barbados bootheel '8' on 1/-) went at £38 for much more than the rest of a postmark assembly in whose company the seller had left it. Lot 214 (from Morawhanna BG) highlighted the advantage of an unusual destination (est. £20, sold £50). The Br. Honduras covers in lot 247 and 252 were appreciated for their rarity and fetched over 50% above their estimates. The Imperium proof, lot 255, went for £170 and leaves one wondering what an example in top condition would sell for nowadays. £95 was a useful price for a first period 'D' on SG1 of Grenada. Jamaican forgeries in lots 339 and 40 were well appreciated – tied bids of £35 in both cases. The scarce Sturge Town cover, lot 374, sold at £52. The inverted St. Christopher, lot 468, ran from a starting £48 up to £115; but what about the lot immediately before, that rare but fragmentary cover of 1884? That didn't sell. Has our membership missed something?

AUCTION UPDATE

BY CHARLES FREELAND

There has not been much fresh BWI on offer over the past three months but there is quite a lot of other news to report. Harmers will shortly close its Chiswick office and probably no longer undertake public auctions, but only private treaty. There are also several staff moves between the London auction houses that look like consolidating Spink and Grosvenor's dominance. However, my summary in the December Bulletin re terms and conditions are already out of date, as Spink have reintroduced a 2% charge for all Visa payments. Paradoxically, Spink/Shreves now accepts Visa for purchases up to \$20,000 without charge.

CAVENDISH 6 MARCH (BY STEVE JARVIS)

The March sale at Cavendish offered an interesting Jamaican collection broken down into 83 lots. After some enquiries the vendor was identified as an American who had quietly accumulated his collection over many years.

The mixed lots looked intriguing and there was a solid selection of adhesives, including \$ varieties but Cavendish's accurate descriptions indicated that quality was variable and I felt that placing blind bids was risky and that viewing was essential. Unfortunately, viewing was not offered in London and I was not sufficiently excited to undertake a trip to Derby. However, Paul Wright and Michael Hamilton made the journeys and confirmed my impressions that this was a reasonable collection but not outstanding, and there was nothing that made the toes curl with pleasure.

Surprisingly, in many cases the vendor hadn't got around to mounting items which, for example, included lots purchased at the Swarbrick auction 12 years ago, still in their lotting envelopes. Of the 83 lots offered 34 were unsold, a high percentage, but those that were sold achieved £12,110 against their estimates of £10,685. The two top results were achieved by a 1890-91 2½d on 4d provisional mint block of four with surcharge double from the 2nd Setting which made £950 against an estimate of £400 while an 1921 Abolition of Slavery 6d essay with 'SPECIMEN' opt. and reversed MCA watermark was sold for £600, double estimate.

SPINK 13-4 MARCH

There was some nice Barbados and Br. Guiana in this sale, and a smattering of other islands too, although a lot of these were previous unsolds. The most aggressive bidding was for member Peter Longmuir's Barbados, where the two most important lots, the Britannia 2d grey cancelled 9 and the triple overprint on SG 104 fetched over double their estimates. The mixed cancellation lots all sold well and the ex-Benwell 1892 bisect cover from St. Lucy to Tobago was £1,400 (plus 20%). There were however a number of bargains among the covers with parish cancellations, though their strikes were mostly inferior. Surprisingly, the Poole cover franked at the standard 1/- rate was more expensive at £800 than the concessionary 6d rate at £700...but condition counts.

The Bermuda 2d sailor's letter via New York at £1,800 would have fetched more if it had been properly signed and the Dominica 1d/6d at £3,800 ditto if it had been a finer copy. Some decent copies of Br Guiana classics continued their strong trend, while most of the Jaffé unsolds of Grenada and the Saints eventually found homes, though almost entirely at extremely modest prices...but then their quality was modest too.

GROSVENOR 18 MARCH

The Edward Young collection of St. Lucia demonstrated the pulling power of a small size specialised collection. St. Lucia has been out of fashion for some years, but maybe the marvellous Jaffé collection has brought in new blood as we have two new members interested in a country that was very popular (and expensive) in the '70s and '80s. The strength of the small Young collection was in the QV keyplates and, depending on quality, big prices were paid in particular for the good range of Thompson flaws. The 1/- used made £580, the ½d on 3d mint £680 (plus 15%) while average mint copies of the 4d and the 6d were £210 and £180. The flaw on the 6d lilac was incorrectly identified, which will be no surprise to our members who know that the flaw only exists on plate 2. A creased and heavily mounted ½d green keyplate with inverted watermark was no bargain at £400 though it remains the first example recorded. The other strong area, no surprise here, was the type-set dues where the highest prices were achieved by two 2d errors: £700 for an early printing of a 2d wide font stamp with number 3690 double, together with a 1d missing stop on piece; and £850 for a 2d with an incorrect number showing correction above on a Panton cover.

SPINK SHREVES 13-4 MAY

The 'Sovereign' collection was a typical US assembly of rare single stamps, nearly all mint. Two internet sites, many phone bidders and an active room made for a very slow sale with about 80 lots being sold per hour. Internet technology has improved to the extent that bidders are now confident of using it and have become significant competitors. But it means that many lots open low causing multiple bidding steps.

Excellent photos of the single rarities were enough to whet the appetite of big hitters. In Barbados, my eyes first lit upon SG36 which went for \$15k. Even more exciting for the specialist was a fine used SG 66b which was pushed to \$29k (cf current SG £8.5k). There was strong competition for the Br. Guiana, best exemplified by \$6.5k for SG05 mint and \$6.75k each for SG120d unused and

147 used. The very rare Br. Honduras perf 12½ 3 cents overprint was fair value at \$16k. The Grenada unused 'postage' manuscripts were fought up to \$55k for the red and \$45k for the black, but my focus was on the provisional postage dues – the 1d/8d was \$1.8k and the 2d/8d \$2.7k. An unsevered pair of Nevis ½d on 1d with violet overprint looked doubtful to me but fetched \$9.5k, as did the same stamp with black overprint, both to the internet. The Tobago 1d on 6d bisect was \$7k and the Turks rarities fetched around full Gibbons. However, there were many average quality stamps throughout for the poorer purse and strong competition for the remainder collections.

COMING EVENTS

The rest of Derek Nathan's BG will be in the 9-10 July British Empire sale with the best pieces (i.e. Cottonreels) in the 12 June Rarities auction. The Victoria auction in June does not have much BWI but at the end of the year Victoria will have two enticing offerings, Paul Larsen's Leeward Is (QV and KE only) and Duane Larsen's Jamaica - more next time.

BOOK REVIEW – REGO – STEAMSHIP LINES TO THE CARIBBEAN

BY DAVID HORRY

HISTORY, ROUTES, AGENTS, SHIP MARKINGS, SHIPS AND FLEET LIST BY MICHAEL R. REGO

Volumes One and Two published by British West Indies Study Circle 2005–07.

What you see listed on the cover is what you get – which is everything there is to know about the Steamship Lines to the Caribbean from 1842 to the present day.

This is the life-work of Michael Rego and he is to be congratulated on such a thorough and well presented work.

Volume One (softback – 228 pages – £28.00 +pp.) was printed by Kym Valley Press, covers *The Royal Mail Line and The Hamburg–American Line*. Every known ship's canceller is alpha-chronologically laid out with a generally high standard of marksmanship. There are plenty of lively full colour pages showing posters, brochures and the better postcards and covers as stacks of black and white photographs of the steamships. There are several indexes to help one through the busy Caribbean shipping lanes!

The acknowledgements alone read like *A Who's Who* of well known Caribbean collectors and dealers. Not since the Philip Cockrill Series has there been such wealth of new information.

This is probably surpassed by Volume Two (softback – 310 pages – £30.00 +pp.) printed by Sarsen Press, which covers The United Fruit Company (The Great White Fleet), Canadian National Steamships (The Lady Boats et al), Imperial Direct West India Mail, Fyffes Line (Ocean Mails) and The Royal Netherlands Steamship Company (K.W.I.M. and K.N.S.M.).

The U.F.C in its heyday was almost like a government in itself, affecting the trade, wealth and politics of many Central American and Caribbean states. Mike's work on U.F.C. is terrific and the history extremely interesting – for example I have never quite understood why so many U.F.C. cancels are found on King George V Jamaica stamps and so few (if any) on King George VI – especially after Jamaica produced a record crop of 27 million stems of bananas in 1937! Rego notes– '*Late in 1937 the banana 'Panama disease' struck the Limon plantations in Costa Rica following earlier disasters in Almirante and Jamaica.*'

Equally the work on K.N.S.M. (*Koninklijke–Nederlandsche–Stoomboot–Maatschaapij*) is amazingly detailed – even showing the European cancellers used by several of the ships.

This brings the work of Cockerill and Hart right up to date – at long last.

Again, good indexing and also lists of ships that were mined and torpedoed in both world wars, with colour plates showing the scarce items.

If one has the slightest interest in West Indies postal history, postmarks, steamships, bananas – whatever, these books are a must. And the good news is that there is another book to come.

These two books are available from Pennymead Auctions (1, Brewerton St., Knaresborough, N. Yorks. HG5 8AZ, Tel: 01423 865962. E-mail: pennymead@aol.com). These and other books published by the British West Indies Study Circle can be viewed either at www.bwisc.org or www.pennymead.com.

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION**CHAS GEE**

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Revisions to contact details should be provided to the Hon. Secretary, Charles Gee, address inside front cover.

In this issue and in future, membership updates will be issued as loose booklet style inserts for the membership booklet.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**IAN JAKES**

Library lists can be supplied upon application to Hon. Librarian accompanied by an S.A.E. (9" x 6½") – 2nd Class postage for 150 gm rate required.

If any member has a book which is not already in the library and which is surplus to requirements, perhaps that member will consider donating it to the library.

EDITOR & WEB-MASTER'S REPORT**STEVE JARVIS**

Peter Fernbank has completed scanning early editions of the Bulletin, which are all now on our web site. Peter has also brought the Index of Bulletins up-to-date (Bulletin No. 215, December 2007). An updated listing is now available for download from the web site or printed copy by application to the Hon. Editor at £2.00 or \$US4.00.

Please view Charles Freeland's regular updates to his 'Auction Alert' article.

The proposed publication schedule for 2008 is as follows:

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Article copy deadline	Fri 1 Aug	Fri 24 Oct
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